WILDSTORM UNIVERSE

#8
Mar

Suggested
For Mature
Readers

sleeper™

season two

ED BRUBAKER
SEAN PHILLIPS

Sean
2004

Wildstorm.com

"SO WE'RE CLEAR ON THE ASSIGNMENT?"

Misery Loves...

WHAT, DO I NEED *TRAINING WHEELS* ALL OF A SUDDEN?

NOT AT ALL, IT'S JUST AFTER AGENT CARVER'S *TROUBLE* LAST WEEK, I WANT TO BE SURE ALL OBJECTIVES ARE CLEAR.

"DON'T WASTE MY TIME *OR* YOURS, TAO...

...WE RAN INTO *COMPLICATIONS*, THAT'S ALL...

"...LET'S NOT MAKE A *BIG THING* OUT OF IT.

OR DID YOU *REALLY* BRING ME DOWN HERE TO TALK ABOUT *HOLDEN?*

WHY, MISS MISERY, ARE YOU IMPLYING I MIGHT HAVE A *HIDDEN* AGENDA?

"WHAT'S THE *RULE* ABOUT IMPLY AND INFER?"

"THE SPEAKER *IMPLIES*, THE LISTENER *INFERS.*"

THEN YES, I THINK YOU CAN ***ALWAYS*** INFER THAT I'M IMPLYING YOU HAVE A HIDDEN AGENDA...

ESPECIALLY WHERE HOLDEN IS CONCERNED.

YES, WELL, ***CLEARLY*** WE KNOW EACH OTHER TOO WELL.

"I'M NOT SURE WE KNOW EACH OTHER AT ***ALL*** SOMETIMES, TAO...

...BUT WE DEFINITELY KNOW EACH OTHER'S ***NATURE.***

"AND ***NEITHER*** OF US IS THE KIND TO DENY IT.

SO, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ***KNOW*** ABOUT OUR BOY?

HE WAS UPSET ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO TRIPLE-X RAY.

"YOU MEAN THAT YOU ORDERED HIM KILLED?"

YES.

HOLDEN IS STARTING TO TAKE IT ***PERSONALLY*** WHEN HIS FRIENDS DIE...

"...A TRAIT I'M ***ASSUMING*** HE ACQUIRED DURING HIS YEARS AMONG THE ENEMY."

HE'S ***FINE.*** HE WAS JUST SHOCKED...AND PETER GRIMM WAS AN ***ASS*** ABOUT THE WAY HE HANDLED IT...

"...REALLY SHOVED IT IN HIS FACE...JUST LAUGHED AT HIM."

YES, PETER ***CAN*** BE THAT WAY, I KNOW...STILL, I'D LIKE YOU TO START KEEPING AN EYE ON OUR ***MUTUAL FRIEND*** FOR ME, AFTER TODAY'S TASK.

JUST TO BE SURE WE CAN ***TRUST*** HIM.

WHATEVER YOU WANT, BUT I THINK IT'S A WASTE OF TIME...

"...HOLDEN'S EXACTLY WHERE YOU WANT HIM TO BE...

"...AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHERE HE'S GOING TO ***STAY.***"

I'M ***DISAPPOINTED,*** HOLDEN...

...DON'T YOU THINK YOU COULD'VE FIGURED ***SOME*** WAY TO KEEP MY ASSET ***ALIVE?***

YOU ***CAN'T*** UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH THIS SETS ME BACK.

HEY, FUCK YOU...A FRIEND OF MINE GOT ***KILLED*** ON THAT JOB, BECAUSE ***YOU*** USED HIM TO GET TO ME.

AND THAT ***ASSET*** YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT WAS A FUCKING ***CHILD!***

ACTUALLY, MARLON WAS NEARLY ***THIRTY...*** LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING.

LOOK, THAT'S-- THAT'S ALL BESIDE THE FUCKING ***POINT,*** ANYWAY.

AND WHAT ***IS*** THE POINT, AGENT?

WE NEED TO MOVE UP OUR *TIMETABLE.*

WHY?

WE JUST *DO.* IT'S GOTTEN TOO UGLY ALREADY...RAY GOT KILLED FOR *NOTHING,* AND NOW HE'S...

WHAT?

LOOK, JUST, IF YOU WANT TO *DO* THIS, IT'S GOTTA BE SOONER THAN YOU PLANNED.

OR ELSE I'M *OUT.*

TOUGH TALK JUST MAKES ME WONDER WHO YOU'RE *REALLY* WORKING FOR HERE, HOLDEN.

AGAIN, FUCK YOU.

I'M WORKING FOR A *CURE,* NOT FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT'LL EVEN *WORK,* MOVING UP THE DATE?

IT WILL. HE *TRUSTS* ME.

AND WHY WOULD HE--

OH.

HE'S THREATENING THE *GIRL*, ISN'T HE? MISS MISERY?

NOT OVERTLY.

OF COURSE NOT, THAT WOULDN'T BE HIS--

DEET DEET DEET

THIS IS LYNCH... MMHMM... *WHAT?*

NO, THAT'S *CORRECT*... HOLD YOUR POSITION AND I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.

TROUBLE?

NOTHING *YOU* NEED TO WORRY ABOUT.

WE'LL HAVE TO FINISH THIS NEXT WEEK...

...UNTIL THEN, I'LL KEEP YOUR REQUEST UNDER CONSIDERATION.

AGENT ST. JAMES...

...AND WHAT EXACTLY ARE ***YOU*** DOING HERE, VERONICA? WERE YOUR ORDERS ***UNCLEAR*** IN SOME WAY?

I WANT TO SEE HIM.

AS I EXPLAINED TO YOU LAST MONTH, THAT IS ***IMPOSSIBLE.***

ONE OF HOLDEN'S REQUESTS WAS THAT ***YOU*** BE KEPT AS FAR AWAY FROM HIM AS ***POSSIBLE.***

YOU'RE LUCKY TO STILL BE ON THIS DETAIL AT ALL, AGENT.

YOU SON OF A BITCH. AFTER EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE TO US, YOU CAN'T--

I CAN AND WILL.

NOW, DO I HAVE TO ***REPEAT MYSELF*** ABOUT HOW LUCKY YOU ARE?

OR WOULD YOU RATHER REALIZE THAT FOR ***YOURSELF*** IN A BASEMENT OFFICE IN CHINA?

...NO.

YOU HAVE YOUR ASSIGNMENT, AND I EXPECT YOU TO PROCEED AS ORDERED...

LIVE GIRLS XXX

"...ASSUMING YOU HAVEN'T LOST YOUR MARK."

YO, YO, WHITE GIRL. GOT THAT ***VOLCANIC*** ROCK YOU BE LOOKIN' FOR OVER HERE.

SMOKE THAT ROCK LIKE COCK, WHITE GIRL.

A BIT LATE FOR CRACK, ISN'T IT?

NAW... CRACK BE OPEN ***ALL NIGHT.***

HOW ABOUT A FREE SAMPLE?

DAS' RIGHT, BITCH, FEEL DAT SHIT, RIDE IT. FEEL FUCKIN' GOOD AS SHIT...

IT'S NOT BAD.

YOU BE A TRIP, COMIN' DOWN SOME DARK FUCKIN' ALLEY WITH MY BLACK ASS...

GOTS TO KNOW YOU AIN'T ***LEAVIN'*** HERE WITHOUT I TEAR ME OFF A ***LITTLE PIECE,*** AT LEAST...

FUNNY, I WAS JUST ABOUT TO SAY THE ***SAME THING*** TO YOU.

HERE, LET ME *HELP YOU,* SIR..

WHY, THANK YOU, MA'AM.

HARDLY FIND A SOUL THESE DAYS WHO'LL GIVE AN OLD MAN THE TIME OF DAY.

I CAN IMAGINE.

AAAIIEEE!

SKEEE

OH GOD... OHMYFUCKIN' GOD...

...FUCK... OH GOD...

OH... YEAH... YEAH...

THAT'S IT...OH...

SHHH... SHHHH...

KRAK

WHAT'RE YOU--?

DEEDLE DEETDEET

I'M KIND OF *BUSY*, HOLDEN, SO MAKE IT FAST...

...UHN HUNH... OF *COURSE* THIS LINE IS SECURE...

YES, I'M WELL AWARE OF THAT. I JUST MET WITH HIM A FEW HOURS AGO...

NO, I'M NOT WORKING YET, I'M JUST GETTING JUICED UP... THAT'S RIGHT, YOU *DON'T* WANT TO KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.

LISTEN, HOLDEN, YOU KEEP TALKING THIS WAY AND I'M GOING TO HAVE TO BURN DOWN AN ORPHANAGE ON MY WAY TO MY TASK TONIGHT OR SOMETHING...

I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF QUITE WELL, AND I WILL.

AND YES, I'M WELL AWARE I'M BEING FOLLOWED, TOO...

"...DON'T WORRY ABOUT *THAT*, EITHER."

WHAT'S THE *BODY COUNT* TONIGHT?

FOUR OR FIVE, AT LEAST. BIG NIGHT FOR HER... ONLY SEEN HER RAISING THIS MUCH HELL WHEN SHE'S GETTING READY FOR *SERIOUS* TROUBLE.

WHAT *IS IT* WITH THIS BITCH?

I MEAN, NO OFFENSE, Y'KNOW?

NONE TAKEN. AS FOR YOUR *QUESTION*, THOUGH...FROM WHAT COMMANDER LYNCH LET SLIP, SHE GAINS *POWER* FROM KILLING, MAIMING, THINGS LIKE THAT.

PHYSICAL POWER.

OH...THEN I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE WHOEVER IT IS SHE'S GUNNING FOR TONIGHT.

NO. YOU WOULDN'T.

LUCKILY FOR US, WE'VE GOT A *SATELLITE LOCK* ON HER SO OUR MEN UPTOWN ARE RECORDING HER EVERY ACTION AND SOMEDAY *SOON* THEY'LL BE USING THEM TO--

HEY!

WHAT?

WHERE *ARE* OUR MEN UPTOWN? THE *HAMPTON ARMS?*

YEAH, *WHY?*

"SHE JUST FUCKING WALKED *INTO IT*, THAT'S *WHY!*"

EXCUSE ME, MA'AM, ARE YOU A *GUEST* OF THE--

BLAM

HEY! HEY, YOU--

BLAM BLAM

HMMMM... NOT GOING TO COME RUSHING DOWN ***TO ME,*** ARE THEY?

SO, WHAT WOULD I DO TO KEEP A BUNCH OF ***TECHS*** SAFE?

HELICOPTER ON THE ROOF.

DING

COME ***ON,*** BEN!

I'VE GOT TO GET THIS ***DOWN-LOADED!***

DON'T BE AN ***IDIOT.*** YOU'VE SEEN THIS WOMAN ***WORK. LET'S GO!***

BEFORE THE OTHERS LEAVE ***WITHOUT*** US!

HOW THE HELL DID SHE EVEN FIND US? WE'RE NOT EVEN ON THE BOOKS...

IT'S TAO. WHAT MORE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

I SWEAR TO GOD I'M ***RESIGNING*** TO--

--NIGHT...

HELLO, BOYS...

...YOU ALMOST MISSED ALL THE ***FUN.***

OH GOD...

THIS IS AGENT ST. JAMES...WHERE THE HELL IS THAT ***BACK-UP?***

*STUCK DOWN IN THE VILLAGE. THERE WAS A **DIVERSION,** APPARENTLY.*

FUCK.

YOU ARE **NOT** TO APPROACH THE SUBJECT, AGENT. LYNCH'S ORDERS.

WHAT'S THAT? ***SKKKRRRKKK...*** YOU'RE BREAKING UP. ***SKKRRRR***

AGENT! GET THE HELL OUT OF--

LIKE HELL.

KLIK

...JESUS...

AAAH!

BLAM

KRAK

UNNHHH!

WHUU--

WHAT THE HELL IS *WRONG* WITH YOU, GIRL? DIDN'T YOU READ MY--

YOU... YOU'RE *HER.*

I'VE SEEN YOUR *PICTURE.*

HOLDEN STILL HAS...MY PICTURE?

DON'T YOU SAY HIS FUCKING *NAME!*

SMAK

GOD DAMN IT!

FUCK!

DON'T TELL ME YOU--YOU ACTUALLY CARE ABOUT HIM?

I'VE SEEN WHAT YOU ARE...

YOU HAVEN'T SEEN *SHIT...*

TEAM 3, LEVEL NINETEEN IS **CLEAR!** NO SIGN OF--

IT'S THE **ROOF!** THEY'RE ALL ON THE **ROOF**... IT'S A FUCKING BLOODBATH...

WAIT! HOLD ON...ONE OF THEM'S STILL ALIVE...

ANYONE HAVE A VISUAL ON AGENT ST. JAMES?

SHE'S THE ONE ON THE ROOF, SIR, THE ONE THAT'S ***ALIVE***...

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE BEAT THE ***CRAP*** OUT OF HER, SIR...GAVE HER A ***REAL*** HAMMERING...

...BUT SHE'LL DEFINITELY **LIVE.**

INTERESTING.

HUHHAGH!

...HOLDEN, YOU SON OF A BITCH...YOU SON OF A BITCH...

HEY GIRL, YOU NEED SOME HELP DOWN THE ***STEPS?*** YOU LOOK ALL--

AAAIIEE!

...SON OF A BITCH...

"I'M A LITTLE CONFUSED HERE, I'M AFRAID...

...WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT?

LOOK, ***YESTERDAY*** YOU ASKED ME TO START KEEPING AN EYE ON HOLDEN...

...AND AFTER SOME SERIOUS THOUGHT, I JUST...I THINK THERE ARE SOME ***THINGS*** YOU NEED TO ***KNOW*** ABOUT HIM.

'CAUSE MAYBE WE'VE ***ALL*** TRUSTED HIM A LITTLE TOO MUCH.

Brubaker*Phillips*Strachan*Fletcher*Quinn*Dunbier